

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

September 16, 2003

Since 1987, the Los Angeles Winter Shelter Program (formerly known as the Cold/Wet Weather Program) has provided over-night beds and services for over 2000 homeless people during the winter months. The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) has administered the program since 1994 with funding primarily from the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds. The Winter Shelters provide approximately 1255 beds in the City and 782 beds in the County, along with hotel vouchers for families and case management services, from December 1st through March 15th of each year.

This year, for the first time, the City of Los Angeles decided to keep its shelters open year-round. The City shelters have been operating at 102% capacity on average and turning people away. Homeless people from as far away as the Antelope Valley have come to the City shelters. In order to support the continuum of care for the homeless population, it is critical that the County also create year-round homeless shelters. According to the LAHSA's 2002 Continuum of Care gap analysis, there is a shortfall of 10,000 emergency shelter beds in the County.

The provision of year-round shelters offering case management services can also

MOTION

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help end the cycle of homelessness. The homeless shelter population typically does not avail itself of assessments or services. However, in 2002, the County's Winter Shelters offered case management to over 6,000 clients, 1,993 of whom accepted assessment and referral services. Of the 1,993, 511 clients were placed in treatment, transitional or permanent housing.

LAHSA estimates that the cost of operating the 782 County shelter beds year-round, plus hotel vouchers for families and case management services, is \$5.2 million. The County should partner and leverage funds with other cities to create its year-round shelters. The County should also consider the experience of the City of Los Angeles, which found that not all of its Winter Shelters were able to operate year-round.

The County faces an additional problem with respect to financing its homeless shelters. Eight hundred thousand dollars have been provided by FEMA annually for the Winter Shelters, but we anticipate a \$500,000 funding shortfall this year. This shortfall could create a crisis situation for the County homeless clients needing shelter and services during the winter months. It is imperative that the County prevent the Winter Shelter funding gap.

In light of the City's experience with operating year-round shelters and the County's desire to partner with cities to create such shelters, an appropriation of \$2.5 million should be sufficient to cover both the FEMA shortfall and the cost of operating County homeless shelters year-round. The Board of Supervisors had set aside several million dollars into the Designation for Budgetary Uncertainties to cover the costs of the Valentin lawsuit. Those funds are no longer needed because the case has been resolved.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief

Administrative Officer to allocate and transfer \$2.5 million from the Valentin line item in the Designation for Budgetary Uncertainties to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) for the purpose of covering any shortfall in funds for the Winter Shelter program and providing year-round homeless shelters in the County.

I, FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors request that LAHSA:

1. Create a plan for year-round homeless shelters serving Los Angeles County outside of the City of Los Angeles, including identification of potential sites and a process for selecting providers, and submit the plan to the Board of Supervisors within 45 days.
2. Collaborate with cities and existing organizations, such as the cities of Long Beach, Glendale and Pasadena, and organizations such as the Westside Shelter and Hunger Coalition and the East San Gabriel Valley Homeless Consortium, in order to leverage County funds and coordinate efforts in the creation of year-round homeless shelters. Preference for year-round shelter sites should be given to locations where there is city support and financial contribution.
3. In collaboration with the Auditor-Controller, create and implement an evaluation plan for the County's year-round homeless shelters, which includes performance measures and outcomes to determine the effectiveness of such shelters in addressing homeless issues.

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